

[Transcription begins]

#37 Tuesday May 16, 1944

Dear Douglas--I had planned to type this letter but Marilyn has a few spare minutes so she is using the typewriter to print the labels that are to be used on boxes of cookies to be packed for the service boys & girls tomorrow night. Tonight while I listen to Fibber McGee & Molly, Henry Aldrich, Gracie Allen, & Bob Hope I can make my batch of cookies & take them down when I go to Red Cross tomorrow.

Thank you so much for your thoughtfulness for Mother's Day. The card was lovely & I would have had the flowers but Marilyn & Bill had already ordered some & Dad thought rather than have them there I would prefer something later & he thought just right, for I am going to get a flame colored azalea to plant among the evergreens at the back fence so that perhaps next spring you will enjoy my this year's Mother's Day gift!

Bill came in again last night and left again this morning--Marilyn says his new ship is wonderful--fluorescent lighting, galley like the "kitchen of tomorrow" with electric stove, refrigerator, etc., both "heads" all tile--his stateroom has a [indecipherable] bench, real sheets on his bed, etc., etc. He thinks that now he is really on this ship, he may be kept here for awhile.

Dad will take care of the Alumni Fund for you. Yes, we received your Shellback certificate and have put it with your other mementos. I am also keeping at your letters, for when you return a glance thru them will bring to your mind many instances which you cannot now write.

Dad and I spent Saturday at Coles--he has all day off now as his shop opens an hour earlier in the morning. We spent the entire time raking & dumping the results in the road in back. We had not touched the place for two years & accumulation of leaves & hay was terrific. Our path to the little house is absolutely impassable but otherwise things are in pretty good shape. We plan to get the house open as soon as possible & then we can use it whenever we have the opportunity. We shall go down again this Saturday, put on the screens & awnings & get the linoleum down in the dining room & the GE out there & then Mrs. Webber & I will have a session together down there.

The Sargents, who have bought Rob Simmons' house [next line indecipherable] are very friendly. We had only been there a few minutes when Mrs. Sargent came up the hill to introduce herself & offer us anything of theirs we needed and about an hour later she appeared with coffee milk shakes & cookies for us.

We were all very much interested in your Norfolk episode and are happy that things were righted so quickly. That nightclub photograph was a lucky break for you, because the fact that you were there at the time and now so far away that you couldn't argue your case in person, might have been a most upsetting several months for you before matters could have been straightened out. Of course, eventually a blood test I think is conclusive proof. What queer things can happen to one in this world! You did just the right thing by

going directly to the Captain--we're happy for you that the case opened so easily.

We have sent you a most insignificant birthday box, Dad has sent you more drawing materials and I believe Trudy Kraus has a small box on the way. We shall be interested to know if they arrive. Have you any book in mind that you would like to read & own. Let us know of your slightest desire for we long to do something for you.

It looks as though the long awaited 2nd front has landed & so far the Allies are gaining but we realize somewhat the difficulties ahead & must not be too optimistic too soon. How we wish we knew what you are doing & just where! Lester Simmons was on a DE in [a] collision off Norfolk, I think & is waiting for a new ship--Babe Simmons is cook of a SeaBee outfit now on its way to Pearl Harbour [sic] we think.

Roger Brown hopes to be married on the 21st of this month & I imagine you will receive an invitation. I ordered you silver napkin rings for them today. Eleanor Paulson will be married at Calvary this Saturday to a medical [indecipherable] have I told you the latest about Barbara Hard? Her fiance (not officially announced, however) Al Kerr has been missing over a year & she [indecipherable] & has served 18 months overseas, has several medals and they say is really an outstanding personality, not strong on looks but a fine man & they just fell in love at [first] sight! The Hards are very happy for her & there will be a wedding of [sic] June 17th. As for me, "missing" would never be a final word and I would always hope & with good reason in these days of miraculous rescues & happenings. We are interested right now in the case of Bruce Sundlun¹ who has been missing with no trace for over a year--night after night his father, "Lawyer Sundlun," has tuned in on the low-wave, hoping to hear something and yesterday he was officially informed by the US government that Bruce "is in friendly hands, well & safe" and the official who came to tell them added this cryptic sentence, "Boy! Did your son do well for himself!" I can't even believe that all hope for Howie Goodchild is gone--an enemy submarine could have picked him up.

Daryl is out in her play pen, reaching out for the dandelions. She loves the flowers and screws her little face up in a knot to show she wants to smell them. Her vocabulary increases every day & she has no difficulty getting all over the house at a rapid trot. She is quick as a flash to spot the animals' water bowl and plunges her hands in it before we can get to her. She knows in which closet we keep the "coo-ka" and the brown sugar, of which she is quite fond.

Bing is in disgrace as I expected. When he trotted by this morning with a starling I heard Mrs. Gray say, "I wish they'd keep that cat home!" and I don't blame her! I do keep him in as much as I can & feed him well. Chip has fallen in love with a little black dog up the street and is behaving quite disgracefully, moaning when kept at home & running away like mad if unleashed. Ah me, pets are so winning when little--such pests when older! But still we put up [indecipherable].

¹ Bruce Sundlun continued to serve as a military pilot throughout the War. Later he had a varied career as an attorney and as a corporate executive and served as Governor of the State of Rhode Island from 1991-1995.

Dad has had a good game of golf with Mr. Dick. He told him about your "poppa" affair and he thought it the funniest thing he had heard. His son Mark is in Italy.

After I seal your letter I wonder if I have covered everything you would like to hear.

Dad & I went to the annual meeting of the church along with the Hards & the Browns. Things are in good shape. It will be queer to be for a time without a regular pastor. Ted Donle is President of the church organization for the coming year.

Last night we celebrated Mrs. Waterman's 80th birthday. You'd never believe it, she is stately and handsome, a wonderful dresser & so interested in everything, well read & a fine sense of humour.

It is now about 3:30--I have been down town all morning, had lunch with Dad there, looked around Sears, Roebuck with tentative thoughts of a croquet set and another lawn chair--then to a second hand shop where for \$1.25 I bought a little table for a lamp. Generally I take my sewing machine down river to put between the two easy chairs in the living room, but as we will be down only occasionally I shall not take it down this year & I had to have something for the lamp.

Virginia Leach, Uncle Harry's youngest, has a new daughter. How girls seem to predominate in our family. Your last letter dated May 5th was received at noon May 9th, wonderful time! We hope you are well and shall be thinking of you on your birthday and hope you get our little package, just to make it seem like a special day. Perhaps you will be lucky & in a port where you can celebrate with a gallon of fresh milk!

Ever so much love

Mother [Transcription ended]